

Swiss National Wound Care Conference 2022



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Every 4 years, the two sections of the Swiss Association for Woundcare (SAfW), come together for their annual conference in Biel (Bern's Canton). The years in between, each German speaking and French speaking section run their own annual conference; these take place on different dates and locations. Not all attendees and speakers are bilingual, and so the joint conferences are simultaneously translated. This conference is located in the Congress Center of Biel (at the North Neuchatel Lake side), which is quite central for everyone to be able to join. One of the chosen conference days is always a Thursday, which allows for attendance and participation from general practitioners, as Thursday is usually a day off for them.

The organising committee, with representation from both sections, proposed a very interesting program, with speakers representing both languages, allowing everyone to attend sessions without the need to use earphones all day long.

The last joint conference was before COVID, and so it was great to be able to meet everyone again. It was a nice change to meet industry and to update our business card portfolio.

It was also an opportunity to hear the news and views from the national umbrella association regarding some national entities and other local initiatives. These included:

Update about products:

- Which are now refunded?
- Which are no longer refunded?
- Which are new or newly available?

National initiatives related to:

- Diabetic foot prevention and intervention
- Skin integrity prevention regarding oncological treatments
- Skin substitute usage
- Ethical code of conduct regarding industry
- Wound care centre endorsement



Keynote presentation from Prof Sebastian Probst, EWMA President, SOWC member



Debridement workshop (French speaking section) held with Paul Bobbink and Carole Guex, both SOWC members (a German speaking similar workshop was held at the same time in another room)



Having drinks with Camille Saini, Lucie Charbonneau and Paul Bobbink, all SOWC members



French speaking MASD workshop with Carole Guex

Links with other wound care related associations:

- Every 3 years the Swiss German section do a joint meeting with the German and the Austrian Wound care association, called "Wund D.A.CH"
- The French speaking section have a relationship with the French Wound Care association, the Société Française et Francophone des Plaies et Cicatrisations (S.F.F.P.C.)
- The World Alliance for Wound and Lymphoedema Care association (WAWLC)
- EWMA
- WCET®

A callout for the work already done:

- The professional profile (both in German and French)
- The translation of international wound care consensus document (for the French translation done in collaboration with Belgium)
- For the French section: the ongoing update of our 'Wound Care' book

- Relationship with our Ticinese colleagues, as there is still no Italian speaking section.

As always, it was a great opportunity, as a member of the Skin Ostomy Wound Care (SOWC) university team, to be involved in the conference in different ways. For example, our famous and successful debridement workshop (on oranges and pig trotters), and for the first time a workshop on moisture associated skin damage.

The French and German speaking sections General Assemblies were held at the end of the meeting. At the French speaking one there was a unanimous vote for the new President of the section, Miss Lucie Charbonneau, the first wound care specialist nurse to hold this position. Lucie is also a SOWC member and EPUAP trustee. Our congratulations go to her.

Along with President Probst and myself, Lucie makes the third association president emanating from the SOWC team: I wonder who's next?

Experiences, problems and solution recommendations of stoma and wound care nurses during the COVID-19 pandemic: the case of Turkey



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The Wound, Ostomy and Incontinence Nurses Society of Turkey (<https://www.yoihd.org.tr/sayfa.aspx?id=88>) (YOİHD) is a nursing professional organisation which was established to improve stoma and wound care nursing (SWCN), to support the stoma and wound care nurses (SWCNs) caring for individuals with wounds, ostomy and/or incontinence, and to promote their professional development in Turkey.

YOİHD conducts various studies and activities such as nursing care, education, legislation and regulation in the field of SWCN. Organising meetings such as congresses, conferences, seminars, symposiums and workshops, cooperating with the relevant national and

international institutions and organisations, planning research and projects, organising competitions and awards, giving educational grants, organising in-service training programs, advocating for the rights of the patients, and providing education for patients and their relatives, are among the activities specified in the statute of YOİHD.

In Turkey, certified training programs for the training of SWCN were initiated in 2000. Educational activities performed in this field were accelerated with the establishment of YOİHD in 2008 and the acceptance of SWCN as a special branch of nursing, regulated by law published in 2011.

It is very important for special branches of nurses to come together for purposes such as sharing their knowledge and experience, expressing their problems and solution or recommendations. In this context, SWCNs meetings are held regularly every year, the first of which was held in 2007. In each of these meetings, workshops are held, and many useful documents developed. Some of them are assessment forms, ethical codes for SWCN and training manuals that will facilitate the care of SWCNs and help them communicate in a standard language, and pressure injury prevention programs, which include the activities to increase the awareness of healthcare professionals (HCPs) and societies about pressure injuries.

The 12th SWCNs meeting, which was the last one of the meetings postponed in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, was held on 15th September 2021, with the participation of 104 members of YOİHD from 25 different healthcare institutions on the online platform. The meeting started with the opening speech of Prof. Dr Ayişe Karadağ who is one of the Board of Directors and founder of YOİHD. Workshop groups determined within the framework of the working topics that constitute the agenda of the meeting were divided into break-out rooms to complete their work.

The experience of SWCNs, who worked with great devotion like all other nurses during the COVID-19 pandemic, their problems and solutions or recommendations were discussed in the 12th SWCNs Meeting. At the meeting, the Workshop-I Group discussed the topic of *Experience, problems, solution or recommendations during the COVID-19 pandemic*; the Workshop-II group discussed the topics of *What are the quality indicators in SWCN?*, and the Workshop-III group discussed the topics of *What should be done to improve the service quality of SWCN?* The meeting ended with the presentations of the workshop groups, also sharing with industry.

Undoubtedly, one of the main topics of the meeting was the discussion of the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, which shook the whole world, including SWCN, and the determination of solutions or recommendations. In this context, the problems, experience and solutions or recommendations of the participants while caring for patients with stoma or wounds during the COVID-19 pandemic were obtained in the workshop group *Experience of SWCNs during the COVID-19 pandemic: problems and solutions or recommendations* attended by 15 nurses providing SWCN services in different provinces of Turkey.

The views of the SWCNs who participated in the Workshop-I group (who discussed *Experience, problems,*

solution or recommendations during the COVID-19 pandemic) were examined under the following headings.

Problems related to the care of individuals with a stoma

- Due to patients' concerns about exposure to COVID-19 there were:
 - failures to regularly come to the authority.
 - delays in admission to hospital despite the development of complications.
 - attempts to take care of themselves.
 - increased calls for help by reaching the hospital mostly by phone.
- In addition to delaying patients' admission to the hospital, there was the delay of surgeries other than emergency surgeries, and delays in early diagnosis especially in cancer patients, which makes timely and effective care of patients difficult.
- Patients prefer to present to the nearest health institution or unit, many are unwilling to use public transport vehicles due to the risk of transmission of COVID-19, which makes it difficult for them to receive the necessary SWCN services.
- Since patients' relatives are not allowed to enter the hospital due to COVID-19, there were:
 - failures to provide education to patients' relatives who provide support for stoma and wound care.
 - increased patient difficulties in complying with stoma care and in managing the stoma and wound care.
 - increased development of complications.
 - increased inability to receive support from patients' relatives for outsourcing products that are not available in the hospital, and difficulties in the supply of care and treatment products.

Personal problems experienced by stoma and wound care nurses

- Problems in the supply of personal protective equipment due to the increased use.
- Failure to implement standardised isolation practices for HCPs infected with COVID-19.
- Obligation to work overtime during the COVID-19, and assignment to other departments apart from SWCN duties.
- Assignment of SWCNs to replace nurses infected with COVID-19.
- No additional pay for working overtime, instead, being forced to go on leave.

- SWCNs, whose spouses are also HCPs, had to be separated from their spouses and children for a long time, leading to problems in family relations and processes.
 - Disruption of primary SWCN services and failure to perform effective patient follow-up while being assigned to other departments.
 - Disruption of ongoing scientific studies due to COVID-19.
 - Some SWCNs asked patients to send pictures or videos of their problems to their personal mobile phone numbers; however, this situation resulted in the violation of nurses' private lives by patients, concerns about the privacy of patient data, and having to work outside of working hours.
 - The COVID-19 pandemic process caused SWCNs to have psychological problems and show signs of burnout syndrome.
 - SWCNs who were pregnant or breastfeeding in the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, had a great fear of catching COVID-19 and accordingly they experienced psychological problems.
- sharing them with the patients and maintaining standardised follow-up of patients with images and pictures to be sent at regular intervals, especially to manage care.
 - Increasing the number of SWCNs and Stoma and Wound Care Units.
 - Ensuring SWCNs not be assigned to work outside of the departments that provide stoma and wound care, which is their area of specialisation, and they should be given special unit status.
 - Updating the training of other HCPs on stoma and wound care and organising continuous in-service trainings.
 - Quickly establishing of hospital information systems (National Database for Stoma and Wound Care).
 - Establishing online systems through which the patient can reach HCPs, share information and receive support without coming to the hospital, and organising these systems in such a way that they can be used with smartphones/tablets.
 - Increasing the number of scientific studies and sharing positive results with hospital administrations and policy makers.

Administrative problems for institutions

- Assignment of nurses, without intensive care unit (ICU) experience, from other departments to the ICUs due to the increase in the number of COVID-19 patients in these units and the insufficient number of HCPs to care for these patients.
- The lack of experience of these nurses working in ICUs in wound care caused an increase in the incidence of pressure injuries in ICUs and the progression of their stages.
- The purchase of stoma and wound care products was not made or was postponed since institutions prioritised the needs of COVID-19 patients in care and treatment products, which resulted in problems in patient's care who has stoma and/or wound.

Solution recommendations for the problems experienced by stoma and wound care nurses during the COVID-19 pandemic

The solution recommendations of SWCNs who attended the workshop for the problems are as follows:

- Establishing online systems through which SWCNs can communicate with patients.
- Providing mobile phones, other than personal phones, for HCPs that patients can reach in the short term, and ensuring that patients reach HCPs through this channel during working hours.
- Creating e-mail addresses for the units and